

First Love

To begin to try to understand God's love for us and our love for Him, you have to remember your first love. I have only been in love once in my life and I thank Jesus for this because I would have never been able to understand Christianity until this happened to me.

God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him. *John 4:16*

love is the fulfillment of the law. *Romans 13:10*

Jesus said to him, 'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets." *Matthew 22:37-40*

God loves us with "Agape" love, which is the sacrificial infinite love that God has for us through Christ His Son. Both the Father (by sacrificing Jesus) and Jesus by His willingness to be sacrificed, committed acts of amazing agape love for the believer—God's child. What father do you know on earth that would crucify his son to death for you? God the Father did this for us so that we could go to heaven to be with Him and Jesus forever. The purpose of Jesus coming to earth was to redeem man from their sin. Jesus paid the penalty for our sin on the Cross and took our punishment.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. *John 3:16-17*

We will never truly grasp how much God loves us. God gave His only Son to be tortured, crucified to death and undergo the most painful form of death. This is because He loves us that much and wants us to be forgiven and redeemed by the blood of Christ to have salvation.

Jesus Himself allowed His own Crucifixion because of His infinite love for us—the believer. It is Jesus' love that nailed Him to the cross—not the Romans or Jews. Jesus is God the Son and He could have jumped off the Cross anytime He wanted, but He did not. His last words on the Cross was, "Tetelestai"—which in Hebrew means, "paid in full" for the debt of the sin of mankind.

To Him [Jesus] who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood.
Revelation 1:5

And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us
Ephesians 5:2

I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.
Galatians 2:20

Jesus said to His disciples, "This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends." *John 15:12-13*

Did you know that God the Father loves us, the believer, as much as He loves Jesus?

Jesus prayed to the Father, "that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me." *John 17:23*

To me, this is by far the most amazing passage in Scripture. God loves us sinners that much; humans who are at times selfish, inconsiderate and unthankful. By God's grace alone we are saved.

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. *Ephesians 2:8*

Look deeply at a relationship between two people that are in love with each other. When you do this, there are times when you will understand God's love for us and there are times when you will understand how our love should be for God and Jesus.

We as the believer, God's child, must truly be able to say:

"I am in love with you Father."

"I am in love with you Jesus."

"I am in love with you Holy Spirit."

"I am in love with you God. Amen."

Do you remember when you fell in love for the first time? I remember as if it was today. I wanted to see her all the time. Talk to her all the time. Wanted her to call me all the time. I got sad when she would not call me for a few days. If it went as long as a week, it was the end of the world. I was willing to sacrifice myself for her—that is how much I loved her. I was willing to do anything to help her. I promised her I would never leave her, never forget her, and never let go of her. And I have still kept that promise.

God promises never to leave us or forsake us.

For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." So we may boldly say:

"The LORD is my helper;

I will not fear.

What can man do to me?" *Hebrews 13:5-6*

"No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life; as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you nor forsake you." *Joshua 1:5*

I know I will love this girl forever. I still think about her all the time. In the morning when I wake up, mid-day, when I go to bed and in the middle of the night. This is how we are to love God.

But as it is written:

"Eye has not seen, nor ear heard,

Nor have entered into the heart of man

The things which God has prepared for those who love Him." *1 Cor 2:9*

But if anyone loves God, this one is known by Him. *1 Cor 8:3*

We love Him because He first loved us. *1 John 4:19*

The only person I love more than this girl in the whole world is Jesus Christ. I am in love with her and I am in love with Jesus Christ. I think about Jesus and talk about Jesus all day long and all night long. Ask anybody who knows me and they will tell you this is true. As a physician, I still tell every patient about Jesus and minister to them. I am a preacher first and a doctor second. Jesus first at all times, 24/7/365, not just Sunday morning.

Did you know in Scripture we (the church, the believers) are the virgin bride of Christ?

Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, “Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb’s wife.” *Revelation 21:9*

Jesus said, “The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son” *Matthew 22:2*

Jesus said, “Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish. Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them... And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut.”

Matthew 25:1-10

We are married to Christ when we confess Him as Lord and Savior. Being virgin brides, Christ is our first love. Christ in fact warns us in Revelation to never forget our first love for Him.

“Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place— unless you repent.” *Revelation 2:4-5*

When we say our confession of faith we are in fact saying, “I do” and “yes” as in a marriage ceremony. For example, “Do you accept and receive Christ as your Lord and Savior as long as you shall live?” And you answer “I do,” “yes!” Marriage is a commitment. Our salvation is a commitment to Christ. Our heart chooses Jesus forever.

When I fell in love, I wanted to marry this girl. I could think of no other girl that I want to be with forever. One day I confessed my eternal love to her and said “I love you so much and I need you in my life forever.” These are words that we need to say to Jesus Christ. I will never forget that day, just like I will never forget the day I accepted the Lord into my heart. I simply could not get enough of my first love. I needed her love as much as possible. When she or I called each other, I never wanted to get off the phone. This is true with our relationship with Jesus. If we love Him, we will talk to Him, pray to Him and listen to Him.

Many times I tell people about this girl and tell them how much I love her. This is why true Christians are not afraid to tell people: 1) they are Christians, 2) they love Jesus, 3) they are willing to tell other people about Jesus— to witness about the Christ, and 4) they will say “I love the Lord!”

And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

1 Cor 13:13

Jesus in His last statement to His disciples was the Great Commission—He commanded us to tell others about Him.

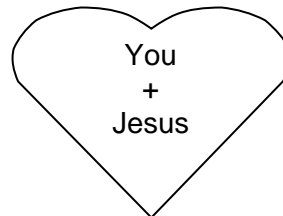
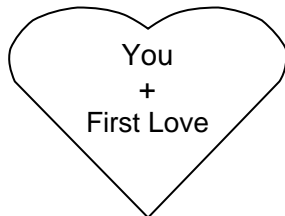
“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen. *Matthew 28:19-20*

Jesus after His resurrection appeared to seven disciples at the seashore and asked Peter three times, “Do you love me?”

Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?”
 He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.”
 He said to him, “Feed My lambs.”
 He said to him again a second time, “Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?”
 He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.”
 He said to him, “Tend My sheep.”
 He said to him the third time, “Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?” Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, “Do you love Me?”
 And he said to Him, “Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You.”
 Jesus said to him, “Feed My sheep. *John 21:15-17*

This is one of the best ways to know if someone is a Christian. Ask them “Do you love Jesus?” If they say “Yes” every time, they are a Christian—a follower of the Christ.

Love is a decision of the heart. Faith is a decision of the heart. Is Jesus in your heart all the time because you love Him? Do you remember the Valentines Day card you gave your first love?



Faith is a love relationship with Jesus Christ.

I know I will love Jesus Christ forever. I told my first love I would love her forever and I still do. I was ok with forever. I want to be with her forever and absolutely no one else. If she made mistakes, I didn't care. I forgave her and love her unconditionally. If she committed lies, robbery, mistakes with drugs or being selfish in her relationship with others, I did not care. I would still forgive her, receive and accept her and love her.

This is how God loves us. When we receive Jesus as our Lord and Savior, God forgives us of all our sins: past, present and future; no matter how terrible they are. In fact, the Father no longer sees any of our sins when we become His child. All He sees is the blood of Jesus Christ covering us. We are made white and pure as snow. Our sins are as far from Him as east is from west. We are cleansed completely from our sin and all that matters to God is our love for Him and Jesus and His love for us. Forgiveness is an act of love. God forgives us because He loves His children.

“For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.” *Hebrews 8:12*

the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. *1 John 1:7*

Have mercy upon me, O God,
 According to Your lovingkindness;
 According to the multitude of Your tender mercies,
 Blot out my transgressions.
 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
 And cleanse me from my sin. *Psalms 51:1-2*

The LORD is merciful and gracious,
Slow to anger, and abounding in mercy.
He will not always strive with us,
Nor will He keep His anger forever.
He has not dealt with us according to our sins,
Nor punished us according to our iniquities.
For as the heavens are high above the earth,
So great is His mercy toward those who fear Him;
As far as the east is from the west,
So far has He removed our transgressions from us. *Psalms 103:8-12*

With my first love, I loved her, wanted to protect her, care for her and be with her. When she called me I was in heaven. I was happy and lit up like a candle when I saw her, I could not think of anything else but her and time itself would stand still. I could stay next to her forever and never wanted to leave. To hold her and to look into her eyes was pure love. It was all I ever needed and was the best moments of my life.

Are you starting to begin to see how much God loves us? God holds us in His arms and bosom and never lets go. He wants us to pray to Him to tell Him all our problems and burdens and He takes care of us.

We received all our emotions from God. We are made in God's image. I began to understand what God wants in our faith—love relationship with Him and Jesus. He simply wants us to love Him and Jesus—to fall in love with Him and Jesus. All I ever wanted in life was for the girl I was in love with to fall in love with me and to love me. I wanted nothing else and nothing else mattered. But in life, you cannot make someone love you. It is a free will decision of the heart. As much as I loved this girl, I could not make her love me. It had to be a decision of her heart on her own.

I remember when I told her the first time I loved her. I was the most nervous and scared I had ever been in my whole life. I was afraid to tell her and I was afraid she would say nothing back. If that happened, I don't think my "achy breaky heart" could have taken it. I might have just died on the spot. It's weird how the most important thing you have ever done occurs at what seems to be the worst timing to do it. She was having the worst day of her life and out of nowhere I held her and told her, "I love you." And she said "I love you too." This was, is, and will always be, the best moment of my life.

God loves us this way. He just wants you to say to Him, "I love you too."

God is love. I hope God does not get mad at me but I believe God needs love in return, just as we do. He wants us to love Him, praise Him and worship Him forever. The most famous Christian nursery rhyme is "Jesus loves me." I even made a Christian song titled, "Jesus loves me" that is going all over the world. Jesus loves me because the Bible tells me so. The entire Bible is a love letter to us from God telling us how much God and Jesus loves us.

And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. *Romans 8:28*

There are 3 things God cannot do:

- 1) He cannot learn
- 2) He cannot lie
- 3) He cannot make us love Him

God cannot force us to love Him. When we choose Jesus and receive Jesus into our heart, it is done by our own free will. God does not want robots. He wants children to come to Him, to choose Him and Jesus because they want to and because they love Him. This is why the devil and evil is allowed to exist on earth. If Satan was not on earth, we would pick Jesus to follow only because Jesus would be the only choice. To truly choose Jesus, there must be another choice (the devil, false religions or science as your god, etc.) E.g. If you are on an island that only has one girl, then choosing her is not a choice. You picked her because she was the only one there. If there are two or more girls on the island, then picking that first girl would truly be a choice.

In God's perspective, you choosing Him and Jesus with your own free will is more important than the devil and evil existing on earth for a brief moment in time.

Faith is simply a close love relationship with Jesus and God. In fact, the two words faith and love are interchangeable. Love is the most important dimension of faith. And in Scripture when you put love in place of the word faith, you will understand Scripture more deeply.

By definition, 1) faith is our relationship with Jesus, and 2) we are to love the LORD our God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength.

And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' *Mark 12:30*

- 1) Faith = Our relationship with Jesus
 - 2) Our relationship with Jesus = Our love for Jesus
- therefore, 3) Faith = Our love for Jesus

In any true love relationship both people have to love each other. This is Christianity.

- 1) God loves us forever—This is eternal and never changes.
- 2) We are to love God and Jesus in return for eternity.

When I fell in love, I told the girl I would love her forever and to this day I still love her and I know I will love her forever. True love never dies. True faith never dies. A true Christian will never stop loving Jesus. Christian = person who follows the Christ = person who loves the Christ. A true Christian will always have Genuine Saving Faith and they will change for the better because Jesus is in their heart and God the Holy Spirit lives inside them. In the true believer, you will see a changed person by definition because Jesus is in the man and the power of the Holy Spirit is transforming the person (sanctification). A true Christian cannot lose their salvation because if they truly loved Jesus, they would keep the faith.

When you fall in love with Jesus you change. You become a different person. You are born again. When I fell in love with Jesus, I changed. I was no longer a hater, I loved Jesus and started to love my neighbor. I was able to show mercy and forgive people for their sins against me; when before I was a Christian, I had great difficulty with forgiveness. With Jesus in my heart, I was able to give up some very bad sins that I was doing and at the same time I started doing more good deeds. When I fell in love with the girl, I changed. I wanted to please her. I wanted to be an example for her and be a good person that she would respect and love.

My first love was the only girl I wanted to talk to and see all the time. The #1 sign of true love is the desire to talk to and see each other and give to each other. If there is no desire to communicate, there is no relationship. The same thing applies to prayer (talking to Jesus and God).

I tell you that if a person never prays, never talks to Jesus, never wants to talk to Jesus, and never asks Jesus for help then he is not a Christian. He is not saved. How can you say you love someone but then you never want to talk to them.

I preach the doctrine that the best sign of genuine saving faith is a prayer life. A person that prays to Jesus throughout his life is a person that has a close personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Only God knows the heart of a man but you can see the heart of a man by his actions.

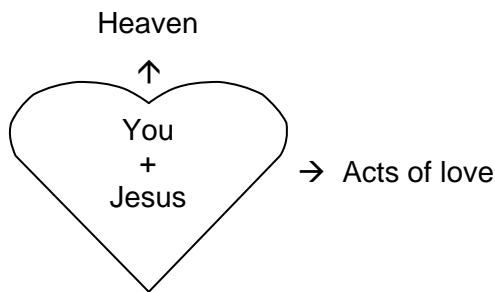
“I will show you my faith by my works” *James 2:18*

“faith without works is dead” *James 2:26*

When I see a person prayed up and prayerful, I see Jesus in the man. When I received Jesus as my Lord and Savior, I changed.

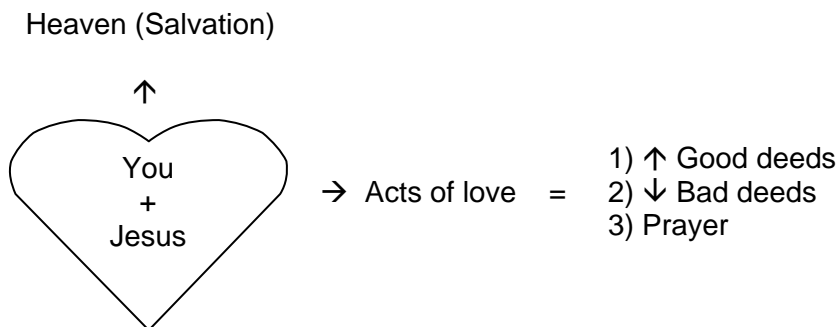
Suddenly I wanted to do things to please Jesus simply because I loved Him and I started doing less bad things and more good things. As the song goes, “Jesus on the inside making changes on the outside” that people saw regarding me. One old friend said to me, “You must have Jesus because only God Himself could have changed you.” This statement is true.

Faith is a love relationship with Jesus Christ.



When you love Jesus, you show it. When you love someone, you show it. It is not enough to say it. The heart and deeds are one. The two go together. They are both mirror images of each other. Two sides of the same coin.

Even so, every good tree [heart] bears good fruit [acts/deeds], but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. *Matthew 7:17-18*



With love you don't just say it, you do it. Show me you love me then I will believe you. A girl that truly loves me will be faithful to me, call me and want to be with me. You know if someone loves you by their actions toward you. Out of the heart proceeds our deeds. If you love Jesus, you will try to do better (more good deeds) to please Him. You will try not to do bad things (bad deeds, sin) because you don't want to hurt Jesus. And again, if you love Jesus, you want to talk to Him and you therefore pray to Him.

Acts of love

Jesus

- ◆ Pray
- ◆ Read the Bible
- ◆ Witness openly about Jesus to others
- ◆ Go to church
- ◆ Tell Jesus, "I am in love with You Lord, I confess You as my Lord and Savior"

First love (the girl)

- ◆ Talk to her, call her
- ◆ Read her text messages to me, read her love letters, cards to me
- ◆ Tell everyone how much I love the girl
- ◆ Visited her home
- ◆ Tell her, "I am in love with you"

When you love Jesus Christ, you will show it, confess it, declare it to the world loud and strong and everyone will see and know your love for Jesus. And most importantly, Jesus will see it and know it.